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Delicious
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175

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A vertical garden shelf against a light blue wooden wall. The top shelf holds a wooden planter box with green leafy vegetables and a terracotta pot with a purple-flowered plant. The middle shelf has three glass jars with gold lids containing seeds or beans, and a bundle of rosemary hanging on the right. The bottom shelf shows terracotta pots and more herbs.

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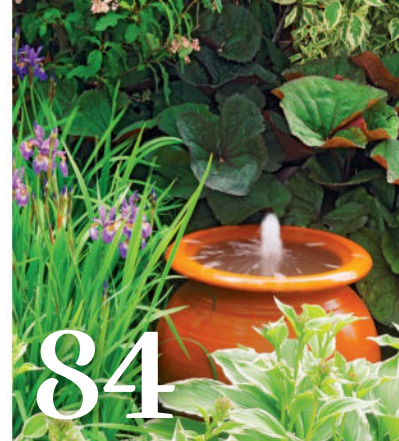
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A purple bicycle is positioned in a lush garden. A large, rectangular wicker basket is attached to the handlebars, overflowing with a variety of colorful flowers including red, yellow, and purple blossoms. The bicycle is parked on a light-colored path, and the background is filled with tall green grasses and other garden plants. The overall scene is vibrant and decorative.

DÉCOR PROJECTS

Easy crafts and ideas to adorn your backyard
and turn it into a charming outdoor oasis.

Accessorize Your Garden

The options for creating unique, flea market-inspired outdoor spaces are limitless. Just tap into your imagination and learn to think outside the box (or bathtub!).



Metal planters can overheat and damage roots. To protect your plants, choose a light-colored metal and avoid placing it in an area that gets full sun.



Being wildlife-friendly doesn't have to be dull; brightly colored insect hotels create an interesting focal point while encouraging beneficial bugs into the garden by providing a roof over their heads.

An old metal bathtub is given new life when used as a giant planter. Larger containers like this are good for retaining moisture and could be used to grow bog plants like arum lily and Siberian iris.

Design a cheerful spot in your garden with a zesty citrus theme. Plant a lemon tree in a yellow pot for a focal point and surround with citrus-themed fabrics and yellow and white flowers.

You've heard the saying: One man's junk is another man's treasure. This salvaged dining chair is a perfect example. The hens and chicks planted in the seat cushion tie the chair into the surrounding garden.



Love pink? Create a feminine feel with petals and pillows in your favorite hue. Complement with other accessories, like shutters and pots, in coordinating colors such as purple and white.





Add a sense of drama to your outdoor entertaining space with a mirror, which is perfect for reflecting candlelight at night.

Using an antique baby carriage as a decorative planter (this one is planted with calibrachoa and petunias) is a great idea. Since it's portable, you can easily move it to give your plants maximum sun.





Build a seaside scene with shells, fossils, bird sculptures and driftwood objects. Complement with coastal colors for a true beachy vibe.

Keep an open mind when perusing your local flea market. This old laundry wringer—used to display terra-cotta sculptures—adds a fun pop of color and a touch of whimsy to this garden.

A mix of neutrals, greens and blues helps create a relaxed, beachy-chic look. Oversize, green leafy plants complete this tropical island setting.





QUICK TIP

Natural jute twine is not only inexpensive, it adds a rustic feel to your garden and is biodegradable. Coat the twine with linseed oil to lengthen its life span.

Delicate Bulb Vases

Here's a bright idea! Don't throw your spent light bulbs into the trash—turn them into unique garden accessories.

▶ We've all heard of a bulb vase, but these little beauties take that concept to the next level! The next time your light bulb flickers out, don't toss it in the trash. Instead, give it new life by turning it into a tiny hanging vase full of miniature blooms. Planning to

host an outdoor party or dinner? Ask your family and friends to save their burnt-out bulbs for you. A yard filled with these homemade hangers will certainly impress your guests. Read on to learn how to make the unique vessel—it's surprisingly simple!

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour

COST \$

MATERIALS

- Pliers
- Screw base light bulbs
- Screwdriver or other pointy tool
- String or wire for hanging
- Small delicate blooms



STEP 1 Using a pair of pliers, remove the small silver cap on the end of the light bulb. This should just pull off.

STEP 2 Once the silver cap is gone you should notice a small hole. Inside is a black glass section. You need to break this by using your pointy tool. Just give it a wiggle and pull it out.

STEP 3 Using the same tool, break the bulb's filament section and discard, leaving the bulb completely empty.

STEP 4 Take string or wire (or raid the shed for a ball of natural jute garden twine), and tie it around the threaded (ribbed) metal part of the bulb. Fill the bulb with water. Pick a bunch of delicate flowers—such as lobelia, sweet peas, crocosmia, catmint and jasmine—from the garden, place them in the bulb, then hang it and admire your handiwork!

QUICK TIP

The solid purple paint used here really makes the red and yellow flowers pop. If you opt for another paint color, make sure it works well with your blossoms.



Pedal Pusher

Have an old bicycle collecting dust in the garage?
Just a few simple steps will turn it into a work of art for your garden!

O The ultimate bicycle built for two—two baskets of flowers, that is! An eye-catching addition to any garden, the best part about this planter on wheels is that you can move it around to get maximum sun exposure. But be sure to dig the back tire into some dirt when you

pick a location: If the wind picks up, the kickstand might not be enough to keep your pretty planter upright.

If you don't have an old bike, you can pick one on the cheap at a flea market or garage sale. For the best results, be sure to remove any labels from the bicycle before painting.

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 2 hours

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Children's bicycle
- Spray paint
- Cardboard or paper
- Rubber gloves
- String or wire
- Wire or wicker baskets
- Plastic/burlap basket liners
- Potting compost
- Colorful plants

STEP 1 Wash and dry bicycle. Protect the ground with cardboard, then place bicycle on top. Wearing gloves (and old clothes), apply several light coats of paint to all surfaces of the bicycle, following paint manufacturer's directions and allowing paint to dry after each coat.

STEP 2 Using string or wire, attach one basket to the handlebars, and the other basket over the back tire.

STEP 3 Place a liner in each basket. For a wicker basket, try a plastic liner (no need for a decorative liner because it won't show).

STEP 4 For a wire basket, opt for a burlap liner (because it will show through the basket's mesh).

STEP 5 Fill each basket with potting compost. Plant a mix of flower colors in each basket

STEP 6 Water all the plants well, taking special care to water them regularly in the summer months.



Labels to Love

Plant markers help us to decipher sage from cilantro in the garden, but they can also add a fun design element. So what are you waiting for? Go on, get crafty!



Paint wooden popsicle sticks in your favorite colors, then stamp with plant names for simple but effective artsy labels.



Wooden clothespins, painted in pastel colors with plant names added, clip easily onto barbecue skewers or pot rims.



Not that we need an excuse to drink our favorite wine, but you'll need a few corks to make these tags. Use a permanent marker to write the plant names on the corks, then push each onto a barbecue skewer.



Large plain wooden labels get a smart look with stenciled lettering. They're easy to read and reusable.

For these quirky labels, we painted stones black, then used a chalkboard marking pen to add the plant names. They can be reused year after year.



Once your painted pots have dried completely (this may take a day or longer), apply a clear, water-based acrylic to seal the paint and protect the color.

Paint your empty plant pots in assorted pastels, then use black paint to create a mini chalkboard on the side of each. Using a whiteboard marker, write a plant name on each chalkboard. For a clever touch, we used the scientific names of our herbs.



QUICK TIP

An ombré effect begins with one color and moves into another, like these blue-to-green wings. Analogous colors (next to each other on the color wheel) work best.

Winging Ways

Creating these vibrant, decorative dragonflies is a fun and super-easy craft to do with children of all ages.

 Kids having been having fun with sycamore seeds, also known as polly noses, for years, opening them up and sticking them on their noses. Well, here's another, more aesthetically pleasing way to delight in the

helicopter-like seeds—turn them into beautiful dragonflies. They're so simple to make and a great creative project to do with children. And the expedition to collect the sycamore seeds can be just as fun as the craft itself!

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour plus drying time

COST \$

MATERIALS

- Sycamore seeds—at least two pairs for the wings of each dragonfly
- A twig for each body
- Two shades each of blue and green paint
- Fine paintbrush
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks

STEP 1 Practice blending paint colors to create a variety of shades that will allow you to ultimately achieve a gradient effect.

STEP 2 Start by painting the 'wings' and seed pod of a sycamore tree in either blue or green, going from dark to light for an ombré effect as shown.

STEP 3 Cut the twig to 4 inches long and paint it in the darkest hue you used on the wings. Once the wings and the body are dry, use a hot-glue gun to attach the wings to the twig.

STEP 4 Paint and assemble your second dragonfly in another shade, following the same instructions in steps 2 and 3. Let the glue dry thoroughly before hanging outdoors or in.



QUICK TIP

Want to keep your cut flowers alive longer? Discard leaves that would sit below the waterline in your vase to prevent algae and bacteria from growing.



Bold Bouquet

You can't beat home-grown blooms, so show them off as a hand-tied arrangement with these expert tips. It's easier than you think!

1 Big, bold blossoms look great in an arrangement—and the best part is that you don't need to shell out big bucks at the florist for one. Our top tip is to keep it simple and follow this one rule: Group large flowers together in a low vase. This helps to create a balanced, polished-

looking centerpiece. If you are going for a really special look for a garden party or other fancy affair, try creating a centerpiece of multiple arrangements, like in the photo on the left. Place several smaller vases with just a few blooms in each around the larger bouquet.

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 30 minutes

COST \$

MATERIALS

- Backyard flowers (we used dahlias 'Mrs. Eileen', 'Babylon Red' and 'Mingus Alex'; sneezeweed; montbretia; seedheads of castor oil plants; and aster foliage)
- Scissors
- Jute or natural raffia twine
- Vase

STEP 1 First, trim the stems of each flower to about a foot long (they'll be trimmed to fit the vase later) and cut off the lower leaves (any leaves sitting in the water will rot and shorten the life of the flowers).

STEP 2 Hold a showier, larger bloom loosely by its stem, under the petals, and keep adding others to your hand one by one. The closer under the flowers you hold the stems, the tighter the round of the bouquet will be.

STEP 3 Add in smaller blooms in complementary colors around the large flowers. Once you are happy with the arrangement, wrap and tie string around the stems where your hand was.

STEP 4 Cut the stem ends on an angle so they're shorter than the depth of the vase. Fill the vase with water and place in a cool spot to ensure the flowers last longer.





QUICK TIP

After you fill the outer mold with concrete, be sure to give it a good shake before inserting the inner mold. This will help eliminate any air bubbles.

Concrete Pots

When used to make these minimalist planters, a simple bag of concrete mix can add some serious style to your garden (without making a serious dent in your wallet).

 Smooth concrete planters lend a modern aesthetic to a garden. But they can be pricey: Some home stores charge upwards of \$150 for a small one! On the other hand, a 60-pound bag of ready-to-use concrete mix is about

\$3 at the hardware store. So roll up your sleeves and take the time to learn how to make your own.

Once you master straight-sided shapes, try using fluted or curved containers to make planters to fill your garden.

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour (plus 24 hours for concrete to set)

COST \$

MATERIALS

- Concrete mix
- Sand
- Plastic containers/cups
- Wooden paint-mixing stick
- Oil and old paintbrush
- Stones
- Duct tape
- Plants and soil (green succulents look great against the gray)

STEP 1 Stir together equal parts concrete mix and sand in an old bowl or container.

STEP 2 Slowly add water, mixing thoroughly with a wooden stick to achieve a batter-like consistency.

STEP 3 Select two containers for the mold; one should fit inside the other with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch all around. Brush oil onto all surfaces of both containers.

STEP 4 Pour concrete mix into the outer mold, filling it halfway. Place the inner mold in the center, pushing it into the wet concrete.

STEP 5 Place stones in the inner mold to weight it down while the concrete sets.

STEP 6 Place tape over the top of both molds to hold the inner mold down. After 24 hours, remove both molds. Fill planter with appropriate soil for your plants. If using succulents, don't overwater—they don't like wet roots.







PLANT PROJECTS

We've got lots of recipes to help you create a truly unique and showstopping garden using salvaged and repurposed materials.

Creative Containers

Sure, flowerpots are fine, but there are so many more objects you can repurpose to make a unique garden display. Remember, if you can put dirt in it, you can plant in it!



Whatever container you use, be sure it has drainage holes in the base. If it doesn't, you'll have to create some to keep your plants healthy.

No room for your own meadow? Then why not cram an old wooden crate full with your favorite wildflowers? This one was created with a meadow-seed mix, and will provide weeks of color.

Here's a low-maintenance display created using a mix of pots and planted with different types of cacti and succulents. They grow slowly and need very little water—ideal if you have limited time.



This woven-wire tiered fruit bowl has been turned into a decorative container by lining the baskets with moss (you could also use green hanging-basket liners to achieve the same effect) and planting with lobelia. Old colanders in different sizes can also be used to create a more rustic version.



Wheelbarrow that's leaky, or has a wonky wheel? Don't throw it away; turn it into a miniature lettuce garden. To make it more interesting or decorative, plant your salad in contrasting patterns.



A pair of old boots can be reused as quirky garden containers that your guests will surely get a kick out of! These are planted with bugleweed and violas.



QUICK TIP

Tropical plants are thirsty! Use a pot with a saucer that will retain water. Be sure to treat standing water with *Bacillus thuringiensis* granules to ward off mosquitos.

Tropical Dream

If you want to bring an exotic splash to your garden, try this planting recipe, which promises to deliver months of vibrant color.

 Who doesn't want to feel like they're at a five-star resort while relaxing in their own backyard? An arrangement of colorful, tropical plants can turn your space into a garden paradise. We realize it can be tough to know which blooms will look good together when often all you can see

when shopping at the garden center is their foliage. So we've constructed a planting recipe that will provide you with a stunning tropical combination. Don't forget to use the tallest plants ("thrillers") at the back, your medium-sized plants ("fillers") just beneath, and your trailing plant ("spillers") below.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Container
- Potting soil
- Bolivian begonia 'Santa Cruz Sunset'
- Begonia 'Glowing Embers'
- Gold licorice plants
- Cherry pie plant 'Butterfly Kisses'
- Bright Ideas series Black Sweet Potato Vine
- Parrot's beak plants

STEP 1 Fill the container with potting soil, stopping 5 inches below the rim. Take the begonias (the "thrillers") out of their pots and sink them into the soil, placing them toward the center of the container.

STEP 2 Plant the remaining flowers (first the "fillers" and then the "spillers" around the edge).

STEP 3 Top off the soil and firm in the plants.

STEP 4 Gently water and wait for your tropical planter to reward you with fantastic blooms! If your potting soil doesn't contain slow-release fertilizer then feed with liquid fertilizer regularly for the best display.



QUICK TIP

You'll get bang for your buck if you grow aloe vera in your herb garden. It can be used to treat acne, combat bad breath and aid in weight loss, among other uses.

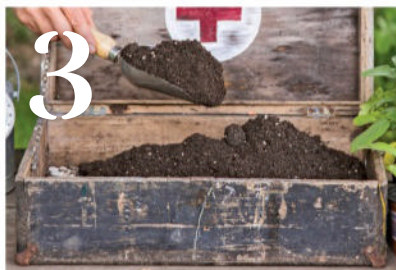
Medicinal Magic

If you prefer to look for natural remedies for minor ailments, try out this recipe for a beautiful home-grown first-aid box.

▶ Many herbs are potent tools—not only in the kitchen, but also for treating a variety of health issues. Since herbal remedies are so popular these days, we've designed a live medicinal container packed with plants that have the power to heal what ails you. (Before taking any herbal remedy, be sure to always check with your doctor.)

Many of the herbs in the planter have both culinary and medicinal

uses. Take calendula—the petals are edible and make a great addition to salads, and the plant has been used as an anti-inflammatory. Purple sage, which has been used to treat fevers, colds and coughs, also adds a savory flavor to butter for a delicious pasta sauce and can be used in any recipe that calls for common sage. There's even a third benefit to creating a medicinal herb garden—it's pretty to look at!



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Wooden suitcase-style box
- Herbal-remedy plants: comfrey, calendula, purple sage, common sage, feverfew, creeping thyme, Eastern coneflower, aloe vera and California nettle
- Red and white markers
- Pot (to trace circle)
- Gravel
- Potting soil

STEP 1 Use a white marker to trace the outer edge of the pot inside the box lid. Draw a red cross centered in the circle. Fill in the rest of the circle in white.

STEP 2 Add a layer of gravel to the bottom of the box for drainage.

STEP 3 Fill the box with potting soil, stopping 2 inches below the top of the box.

STEP 4 Plant the largest herbs first, then add the smaller plants.

STEP 5 Add more potting soil to the box and firm the plants down.

STEP 6 Top with a layer of gravel. Water the box regularly and wait to see the flowers burst open.

Vertical Planting

There are so many benefits to growing up! You can maximize garden space, add architectural detail, plants are easier to reach (no more bending down!), the list goes on and on...

Store-bought planting pockets are a great way to add a splash of color to a dull fence or wall.



A homemade wooden frame is a novel way to display drought-tolerant succulents such as hens and chicks.



Metal cans suspended from threaded and knotted rope create a unique, rustic wall planter. Here, they're planted with erigeron (also known as daisy fleabane).



Steel wires are used to create a framework on which climbers can grow. This example features a deep-purple clematis against a bold orange wall.





A living wall is a beautiful solution for creating privacy or obstructing an unsightly view, like your neighbor's clothesline or an A/C unit.

↑
This vertical screen, made with rusty industrial frames, helps divide the garden. It is planted with varieties chosen specifically for their interesting foliage and textures, which are fully appreciated up close.



QUICK TIP

If you use similar sized terra-cotta pots for all the plants on this stand, it'll be easy for you to rotate the post so the plants all get ample amounts of sun.

Potted Post

Make a statement in your garden with this quick (and inexpensive) project that transforms a wood post into a plant holder that will be the centerpiece of your yard.

▶ If you've got a stash of plant pots that you'd like to fill with color this season, but you're not sure how to display them all, look up! Try a vertical planter, that is.

This project couldn't be simpler: A wooden post, painted a color that will stand out (or blend in, if you like) will support a number of pots

(and who hasn't got old terra-cotta pots out in the shed?).

We've filled our pots with plants that have a similar blooming season. The plan is to swap out other potted plants as they reach peak blossoms so this planter can be a focal point in the yard throughout the spring and summer.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 2 hours

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Wooden post and finial
- Exterior paint and brush
- Tape measure
- Copper wire and cutters
- Terra-cotta pots
- Hammer and nails
- Mallet
- Plants and potting compost

STEP 1 Paint post and finial; let dry.

STEP 2 Measure each pot just below rim. Add 12" and cut wire to this length for each pot.

STEP 3 Bend each wire in half. Hold bend with flat part of wire cutters and twist about 1" below bend to form hanging loop.

STEP 4 Wrap wire around each pot just below rim and twist ends together.

STEP 5 Place each plant in a pot and add soil (if desired, add broken pot pieces to bottom of pot first for better drainage).

STEP 6 Remove pots from copper hangers. Hammer nails into post, staggering spacing, catching tops of hanger loops under each nail as you go.

STEP 7 Use mallet to hammer the post into position in the ground. Attach finial at top.

STEP 8 Slip a plant into each copper hanger, adjusting placement for a good mix of plants and colors.

Garden Support

From trellises to obelisks to beanpoles and frames, there are so many ways to lend your prized plants a helping hand while adding character to your yard.



Gourds grow better on a trellis, since the fruits are kept off the ground where they can rot—plus they're given more room so they don't overwhelm each other.

This rustic arch is made from long hazel bean poles. Cross supports, made from smaller stems, make the frame more sturdy—perfect for growing heavier crops like gourds.

There is no need to buy an expensive obelisk. This one is created from a few pieces of 2- x 1-inch lumber nailed together at the corners.

Fragrant honeysuckle planted in the middle will come back year after year.

To train red currants as cordons they require support—here, they are trained on bamboo canes and tied at regular intervals. These are also netted to keep the birds away from the fruit.



Runner beans require a strong frame for support. Bamboo canes are affordable and easy to craft into a frame—here, they are tied together in a diamond pattern.

For a stunning display of blooms, build a dome-shaped frame to train your roses over. Use flexible branches pruned from your shrubs, pushed into the ground and tied together with wire or string, to build the frame.



QUICK TIP

Don't put your old cans in the recycling bin—this is a clever way to put them to good use. Use adhesive labels to mark each can with the herb you've planted.



Tin Can Trellis

Keep your herbs close at hand, or add some color to a wall, with a trellis planter. In just a couple of hours, you'll have an eye-catching and practical display.

1 If you've got a collection of small plants, like herbs, but haven't got a way to display them decoratively, a trellis might be just the ticket.

A freestanding piece like this adds flexibility to your garden planning, too. You can easily move it to another section of wall

during the growing season to take advantage of the summer sun. And once your herbs are ready to use, you may want to keep the trellis closer to your kitchen for quick snipping.

You can adapt this project to fit your available wall space by adding more vertical or horizontal beams.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 2 hours

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Lengths of 1x2 wood
- Tape measure and saw
- Exterior paint and brush
- Hammer and nails
- Tin cans
- Heavy wire and wire cutters
- Screwdriver and screws
- Plants and potting compost

STEP 1 Measure and cut three pieces of wood to desired trellis height. Measure and cut three pieces of wood to desired trellis width.

STEP 2 Paint wood; let dry.

STEP 3 Use a hammer and nail to punch holes on opposite sides of each tin can.

STEP 4 Punch drainage holes in the bottom of each can.

STEP 5 Measure desired length of handle for each can and add 3". Cut wire to this length for each can. Slip wire ends through can holes and use the flat part of the wire cutters to bend the wire ends up, making handles.

STEP 6 Screw wooden pieces together as shown to make trellis.

STEP 7 Using a hammer and nails, make "hooks" on the trellis for each can. If desired, predrill holes before hammering in each nail to prevent the wood from splitting.

STEP 8 Plant cans with herbs or small plants. Hang the cans from the nails in the trellis.



QUICK TIP

Opt for different colors of the same type of flower in your basket. This way, they'll all be happy with the same amount of water and sun, keeping the basket blooming.

Bloom Basket

A basket overflowing with colorful blossoms brings cheer wherever you display it. You can have our version hanging by your door in an hour—so what are you waiting for?

▶ A lovely hanging basket of flowers adds a splash of color to your home all summer long.

When you're planting, place the larger plants, especially ones that will grow and "spill" over the edges, near the outer portion of the planter. Mix colors as you go to add visual interest. If you've got a few

baskets, rotate their positions every week or so to give them all equal amounts of sun.

To make sure water gets deep into the basket and keeps the liner moist, we recycled an old water bottle as a conduit. Pour water into the bottle and it'll get right down to the roots.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Tape measure
- Coir basket liner
- Marking pen and scissors
- Metal hanging basket
- Water-retaining crystals and plant fertilizer
- Potting compost
- Plants
- Plastic water bottle

STEP 1 Measure and mark a line halfway down the coir liner.

STEP 2 Cut along the line; set aside top half for later.

STEP 3 Place the bottom half of liner in basket; add compost, crystals and fertilizer, and mix together with your hands.

STEP 4 Position plants around edge of basket. Add compost.

STEP 5 Hold top half of the liner over the plants; mark liner where it touches plants. Cut out a semicircle at each mark.

STEP 6 Place the top half of the liner back into the basket so the holes align with the plants already in place. Fill basket to the top with compost.

STEP 7 Cut off the bottom of a plastic water bottle. Remove bottle cap; sink the bottle into the center of the basket to act as a watering device.

STEP 8 Continue adding plants to the basket, filling in any gaps around the bottle. Make sure to allow the plants some room to grow.

Versatile Herbs

Pleasing to your senses of sight, taste and smell, there are so many ways to put these plants to good use.



Drying and storing your own is the best way to enjoy homegrown herbs all year round. One of the easiest methods is to hang tied bunches from the clothesline using clothespins—once thoroughly dry, store them in airtight containers.

Many herbs are very easy to propagate—simply cut a stem and remove the bottom leaves before placing in a jar full of water.



Pick your lavender at its peak for maximum fragrance and color when dried. To dry your lavender, hang the bunches under cover and out of sunlight, which would bleach the color.

A great way to add Mediterranean aroma to your garden is to grow thyme. Here, thyme is used en masse with stepping stones, so the fragrance is released as you walk across the path.



Creeping thyme provides a lush, aromatic ground cover. It will grow best in a dry, well-drained spot. Add sand or gravel to your soil to help thyme thrive.

A large scale weekend project for the avid herb gardener, this herb spiral is made from natural stone but could also be made using lumber poles driven into the ground or bricks. The setting is ideally suited to herbs as it is free draining and most herbs prefer drier conditions.



For ready access to fresh herbs, plant your favorites in a container or hanging basket within reach of the kitchen. Cut regularly so you'll always have a supply of fresh young leaves.





QUICK TIP

A wheelbarrow is ideal for a movable herb garden like this. The greenery contrasts nicely with the rust, and you can reposition this planter to catch the sun.

Rolling Garden

Give an old wheelbarrow a new life by upcycling it into a planter. This project is quick, easy and inexpensive—and if you fill the wheelbarrow with herbs, it'll pay for itself!

▶ A wheelbarrow planter full of herbs will bring loads of rustic charm to your garden.

We started with potted herb plants from the garden shop. (If you've got a green thumb, try planting seeds instead.)

Both wooden and metal wheelbarrows work well for this project. Just check for any loose or missing screws and fix them before you start. Also, make sure the bottom isn't so rusted that it's starting to crumble. And oil those wheels.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour

COST \$

MATERIALS

- Old wheelbarrow
- Sandpaper
- Drill with $\frac{3}{4}$ " bit
- Wire mesh or screen to fit bottom of wheelbarrow
- Potting compost
- Potted herb plants

STEP 1 Sand all surfaces of the wheelbarrow to remove any chipped paint. On the bottom, drill holes several inches apart for draining. Place screen in bottom, over holes; this will prevent the soil from falling through.

STEP 2 Fill the wheelbarrow with potting compost, stopping a few inches from the top.

STEP 3 Place herbs in the wheelbarrow to test the positioning. Place taller plants in the center, with low-growing and trailing plants near the edges. Loosen the roots of each plant.

STEP 4 When you're happy with the herb arrangement, add compost as you plant, firming it down with your hands.

STEP 5 Water the plants evenly to get them settled. Continue to water plants regularly in warm weather.

STEP 6 Position the planter in a sunny spot. Harvest herbs regularly—the more you pick, the more fresh leaves the plants will produce.

OUTDOOR LIVING

Explore ways to make the most of your
backyard from the best barbecues to chic
sheds to shade solutions and more.





Chic Sheds

They're not just for storing garden tools anymore! From delightful dining spaces to rustic retreats, sheds have come a long way.

Check your local building codes before building or installing a shed on your property. Many areas have regulations based on the size of the structure.



A glass-enclosed hexagonal shed is transformed into a dramatic outdoor dining space. Black-and-white decorative paintwork, flowery window boxes and a chandelier inside boost the wow factor.

Use your shed to show off your crafty side. Here, feminine fabrics, a vintage sewing machine stand, bunting and a patchwork quilt work together to create a shabby-chic retreat.



The multiple openings on this potting shed allow the summer breeze to come flowing in. Deep windowsills provide an ideal location for displaying treasured blooms.

This small garden shed has been converted into a beach shack of sorts, with tropical colors and corrugated roofing. In the colder months, it does double-duty as storage space.



By replacing a shed's front with trellis panels and salvaged stained glass windows, this garden sanctuary gains instant character.



QUICK TIP

For a living seat, stick to greenery and flowers like marigold and mums, which are less appealing to bees; and avoid roses, or any plant with thorns.



Living Bench

You'll feel like you're sitting in a hedge with this spectacular seat! It makes a perfect focal point for your garden—and it's simple to make.

1 There's no need to settle for ordinary store-bought garden furniture in your extraordinary garden—not when you can make this bench that seems to be growing out of the earth.

If you prefer a more finished look to the wood, sand and stain the beams, or apply exterior

varnish before putting them in position. If you've never worked with gabions, don't fret. These metal boxes are easy to cut and lift, but when in place, they make this bench super sturdy. This is an ideal project to do with friends—you might want a helping hand with a few of the steps.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 day

COST \$\$\$

MATERIALS

- Two 3-foot-cube gabions
- Bolt cutters
- Roll of sod
- Wire cutters
- Compost and soil
- Heavy jute cord and scissors
- Two 8-foot-long, 2x8 wood beams
- Tape measure
- Lettuce plugs or small plants

STEP 1 Mark the area where you want the bench to go (you will need a spot 11 feet long). Assemble gabions, leaving tops open; place one at each end of the marked area.

STEP 2 Using bolt cutters, cut away an 18" square section in the top, inner corner of each gabion (this is where the seat will rest).

STEP 3 Cut sod into pieces and press inside each gabion.

STEP 4 Press compost against the back of the sod.

STEP 5 Hold sod in place while filling gabions with soil. Fill cutout areas only up to where seat will go. Put lids on and secure (same as assembling the rest of the gabion).

STEP 6 Wrap cord around all gabion edges.

STEP 7 Place wood beams so they rest on cutout part of gabions.

STEP 8 Plant lettuce in the tops of both gabions and water. Trim sod as needed.



QUICK TIP

Don't let your veggies dry out over the open flame. Be sure to coat them with a little olive oil before grilling.

Fire Pit

Fun

This build-a-barbecue project is so easy. It takes very little time and it won't break the bank. You'll be grilling within an hour of building!

 Building your very own fire pit is easier than it looks. It's a great addition to your yard—you can use it for cooking and to keep warm and cozy on a chilly evening.

Before building, check your local town codes first. Then, figure out the best place for your fire pit. It should not be close to your house,

or a neighbor's, because you don't want the smoke wafting in. You should also steer clear of any low-hanging trees, which would present a fire hazard.

When the work is done, set up some chairs around your new gathering spot and enjoy the warm glow and freshly grilled food.

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1 hour

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Paving slab (at least 18 inches square)
- About 40 bricks
- Two metal grates—a smaller one for the charcoal, and a larger one for cooking
- Kindling or firelighters
- Charcoal
- Some tasty barbecue food!

STEP 1 Using the diameter of your smaller metal grate as a guide, position your bricks to form three-quarters of a circle.

STEP 2 Position two more layers of bricks in the same pattern, decreasing the circle size slightly with each layer to create a ledge. Rest the small grate on the ledge. Add two more layers of bricks on top to form a ledge on which your cooking grate can sit, making sure to leave a ventilation hole at the rear.

STEP 3 Place the kindling or firelighters on the bottom grate and light it.

STEP 4 Add the charcoal and when it has started to turn gray with ash, it's ready! Place the larger grate on top; throw your food on like the seasoned chef you are and enjoy!



Storage Secrets

With these clever ideas, you can turn junk into gems, giving everything in your yard its proper place. Now you'll always be able to find exactly what you need.



Part storage, part display, these old kitchen shelves, which have been painted, are a handy way to hold essentials above your potting bench. Cup hooks are ideal for hanging your most-used hand tools.

Storing seeds is a great way to grow the same plants again next year and share with friends. Use old mint tins—wash them well and label them—for dry, dark storage for your seeds so they remain dormant.

Simple pieces of lumber are used here to make a rustic shelving unit against the outside of a garden shed. The shelves can be used for displaying favorite plants and storing pots for seedlings and logs for the fire pit.



A shelving unit placed right outside your back door is a great place to grow fresh herbs. You'll have easy access right when you need them.

Wooden crates stacked against the wall of a shed double as shelves. They can be rearranged as required and used outside in the warmer months as a base for a dining table for an impromptu get-together.



This outdoor shed for trash cans also works for storing children's bicycles and garden toys, keeping them dry and secure. If it's got a recessed roof, as shown here, arrange plants on top.



A rustic garden shelving unit with four shelves. The top shelf holds a large terracotta pot with rosemary, a wooden crate with leafy greens, and another terracotta pot with purple flowers. The second shelf from the top has four glass jars containing green beans, blue beads, burlap, and wooden skewers. The third shelf features a wooden box with garden tools, several terracotta pots, and hanging bundles of herbs. The bottom shelf has a yellow colander with herbs and a small wooden box with floral patterns. The unit is set against a blue wooden wall with various flowers and plants in the background.

QUICK TIP

Prevent wood handles on garden tools from becoming dull and splintered by applying a coat of linseed oil annually. Let dry for three days before using again.

Stylish Storage

Here's a fabulous project to transform an old free-standing bookcase into a smart outdoor depository. It's so easy!

1 If you scour garage sales, flea markets and thrift stores you may realize that there are so many ways to repurpose someone else's unwanted items. It just takes a bit of imagination and ingenuity.

With a fresh coat of waterproof paint, this old bookshelf makes an

attractive addition to your garden, and a convenient space to store tools and dry your fresh herbs.

Attaching the mason jars to the top of the shelf adds an unexpected touch of whimsy—plus, it eliminates the threat of the glass jars tipping over.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 5 hours

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Wood free-standing bookcase
- About 10 cup hooks
- Water-resistant paint
- Paintbrush
- Four mason jars with lids, washed and dried
- Tape measure and pencil
- Screws
- Screwdriver
- Awl
- Six zinc-plated corner braces (optional)

STEP 1 Protect your work surface with newspaper. Apply several coats of paint to the bookcase, letting the paint dry thoroughly after each coat.

STEP 2 Place jar lids on a hard surface, then use the awl to pierce a hole in the center of each lid.

STEP 3 Measure and mark the placement of the lids on the underside of the top shelf, spacing them evenly.

STEP 4 Screw a lid to the shelf at each mark, then screw on the jars.

STEP 5 Screw the cup hooks into the shelf edges where you would like to hang tools.

STEP 6 We positioned our bookshelf on the outside wall of a shed and attached six corner braces to it to keep steady. You could also attach it flush against a wall.

Made in the Shade

Looking for shelter to escape the sweltering summer sun? Here are a few practical and pretty solutions.



Create your own shaded area inspired by a Bedouin tent. Nine wooden poles are used as the frame for this structure. The heavy-duty canvas cover can be removed and packed away for winter. It's important to tie down the tent so that you don't lose it in high winds.

This seating area is shaded by four plane trees that are pruned annually to keep this tight umbrella shape. This natural shade solution can be maintained for decades.



This arbor seat provides a shady retreat. Star jasmine is evergreen and will provide shade and interest year-round, and the heavily scented flowers will delight in spring and summer.





↑
Shade sails are much larger than most patio umbrellas and are anchored at several points. And there's no annoying pole in the middle of your dining table, like there is with an umbrella.

On a tight budget—or just like to save? You can make your own version of a shade sail using a canvas drop cloth.



QUICK TIP

It's not just humans who need shelter from the sun. An awning like this can be used to give plants a break from the sweltering summer heat.

Shading Places

Ever needed to run for shade on a hot summer's day? Try out this quick-fix awning that you should be able to install before you can say "Pass the piña colada."

Remember how much fun it was to build a fort over your bed using your blankets or sheets? This project will have you reliving those innocent childhood days while creating a shady spot in your yard where you can seek shelter from the sun.

You can build this temporary structure with items you probably already have around the home. We've chosen hazelwood poles for the frame, but you could also use some sturdy garden stakes. A lightweight fleece blanket would work just as well as the bedsheet.

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 30 minutes

COST \$

MATERIALS

- Three long poles
- A wall or fence to attach the awning to
- 2 stainless steel eye hooks
- 1 yard of ribbon
- Tape measure
- Scissors
- Bedsheet
- Heavy-duty stapler
- String

STEP 1 Attach the eye hooks to the wall or fence, spacing them the same distance apart as the bedsheet length.

STEP 2 Cut the ribbon in half. Tie a piece of ribbon to each corner of the sheet and tie ends through the eye hooks. Wrap and staple the opposite edge of the sheet around the center of one pole.

STEP 3 Using string, attach a pole at an outward angle to both ends of the first pole. Wrap the string around several times before tying.

STEP 4 Prop the bottom of the poles against the base of your structure to form the awning. Now park your deck chair underneath, grab your book and relax!



10 Great Party Ideas

It's time to celebrate! Entertain your friends and family in style with fabulous décor and fun activities. Read on for inspiration.



Individual LED lights are an easy and inexpensive way to light your paper lanterns and balloons. They're available at most party stores and on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).



Use raffia to tie flower-filled mason jars to chair backs as a party decoration. Here, the flowers are sweet peas and lady's mantle.

Nothing says party like festive hanging pennant banners—they're so welcoming, and they're a fun project to make with the kids. For one-time use, craft them out of brightly printed art paper.



Light the way by filling old terra-cotta pots with candles. You can illuminate the path to your party and add a sense of drama around your dining space.



For a large gathering, set up several small tables. Hang paper lanterns from umbrellas for a fun touch. Individual bouquets of home-grown flowers can do double duty: first as decorations, then as take-home favors.

Keep the fun going into the night. Photos of sparklers turn magical by using a slow-shutter app on your iPhone. Use a shutter speed between 1.5 and 3 seconds and you'll be able to capture patterns and even words in your photos.





For parties that require a seating plan, create a centerpiece with a terra-cotta pot and flowers picked from the garden. Paint or draw the table number on the side of the pot. The blooms shown here are lady's mantle and fennel.

Paper lanterns hung from a pergola at differing heights add interest; when illuminated with LED lights, they will provide a real wow factor at night.





Don't let the setting sun stop your fun! Light your yard with strings of globe lights. If you don't have an electrical outlet nearby, be sure to buy battery-operated lights.



There's no better way of keeping youngsters—and the young at heart—entertained for hours on end than with a good stock of garden games like croquet, giant Jenga, ring-toss and corn hole.



Turn an old picture frame into a chalkboard: Cut a piece of hardboard to fit, and apply two coats of chalkboard paint. Now you can personalize your party message time and again.

Light Up the Night

There's no reason why your outdoor space can't look as beautiful at night as it does while the sun is shining. Try these bright ideas to illuminate your yard.



Add floating candles and flowers picked from the garden to a small patio water feature.

These DIY candleholders are made by wrapping rubber bands around bamboo canes an inch or two down from the top. Slip a terra-cotta pot onto the cane through the drainage hole. Carve a hole in the bottom of a candle and insert it onto the cane. Tie on some festive ribbons.



For a truly high-tech look to your contemporary garden, install LED lighting around the underside of tables and benches. This table doubles as a propane fire pit for added glow.





Candles are a great way to add romantic mood lighting. Battery-operated candles flicker just like real wax and carry no risk of fire.



Integrating lighting into your garden can add an extra dimension—and a higher level of security, too. These uplighters show off the row of trees.

This funky space is created using a tablecloth as a canopy, paper lanterns suspended with fishing wire, and napkins attached to strings with clothespins.

Papier-mâché lanterns add drama. Inflate a balloon; layer tissue paper, flowers and leaves dipped in a glue-water mixture around the bottom half. Once dry, pop and remove the balloon.





QUICK TIP

Use a good-quality exterior paint on the wood, and opt for heavy slate pieces or tiles for the bar top so they won't slip out of place.

Pallet Bar

Happy hour in the garden? Yes, please! This rustic bar is made from a salvaged wooden pallet. And it's so easy to assemble, you'll be sipping vino by the end of the day!

▶ A small backyard bar like this is ideal for impromptu parties or relaxing summer evenings, especially if your space is limited.

You might have spare wooden pallets in the garage, but if not, you can usually find them at

salvage yards or the local dump. Replace any loose nails or screws before you start.

If you've got enough room in your yard or on your patio, make another of these tables to hold party snacks. They're also perfect for displaying potted plants.

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 3 hours

COST \$\$

MATERIALS

- Wooden pallet
- Long ruler and pencil
- Wood saw
- Sandpaper and tack cloth
- Paint and paintbrush
- Drill with screwdriver bit and long wood screws
- Slate pieces or ceramic tiles
- Hammer and chisel



STEP 1 Using a ruler and pencil, draw a straight line down the center of the pallet.

STEP 2 Using a saw, cut along the marked line to make two equal-sized halves. Sand the edges of each piece and use a tack cloth to remove sawdust.

STEP 3 Apply several coats of paint to all surfaces of the wood, letting dry thoroughly after each coat.

STEP 4 Place pallet halves together so slatted sides are exposed, and screw together at each corner, placing screws at an angle.

STEP 5 Measure the top of the bar. The slate pieces or tiles should fit the bar top, with up to 1" overhanging on each edge. If you need to trim tiles, mark cutting lines, then use a chisel to score along lines. Tap the tile with a hammer so the tile breaks along the scored lines.

STEP 6 Place the tiles on top of the bar and align the edges. You can remove them to clean.

Miniature Gardening

Who says bigger is better? These teeny, tiny gardens have a magical, mystical appeal and are so fun to create.



A compact fairy garden—on wheels—is a fun and quirky project to complete with the kids and a great way to reuse an old wheelbarrow that is past its prime.

Mixed alpine plants are used in a salt-glazed container to create this miniature garden. Gravel and beach stones are used as mulch to help the soil to retain moisture.



An old square terra-cotta planter was used to create this miniature garden with a picket fence made from clothespins, grass clippings for a lawn and flat pebbles as stepping stones.



A vintage brown leather suitcase is open, revealing a meticulously crafted miniature woodland garden inside. The garden is built on a bed of green moss and includes several miniature evergreen trees in various shades of green and yellow. A small, light blue house with a brown roof and a circular window is nestled among the trees. A stone bridge with a small stream flows through the scene. A small, light brown mouse is visible on the moss. The suitcase is placed on a bed of green grass and moss, with a tree trunk visible in the background.

To turn an old suitcase into a planter, rip out any fabric lining, drill holes in the bottom for drainage, then add topsoil and your plants. It's that easy!

A vintage brown leather suitcase is open, revealing a meticulously crafted miniature woodland garden inside. The garden is built on a bed of green moss and includes several miniature evergreen trees in various shades of green and yellow. A small, light blue house with a brown roof and a circular window is nestled among the trees. A stone bridge with a small stream flows through the scene. A small, light brown mouse is visible on the moss. The suitcase is placed on a bed of green grass and moss, with a tree trunk visible in the background.

A vintage suitcase is the container for this tiny garden. Store-bought ornaments are used to create a woodland scene. No flowers are used, so the ornaments can take center stage among miniature evergreen trees, moss and alpin.

Tree Houses

Every kid dreams of having an aerial playhouse. Use these five outdoor dwellings as inspiration to create your own ultimate bunker among the branches.



This large tree house doubles as a pergola/shaded area where parents can relax. The portholes are perfect for young explorers to use a telescope or binoculars through.



Part cozy cottage and part fort, this tree house will really inspire young imaginations! With a swing, climbing wall and ramps, the kids should be active all day.



When building a tree house, take care to not damage the tree. Put as few holes in the trunk as possible, leaving at least 18 inches between the holes.

Not a traditional tree house (it's not actually in a tree), this structure achieves the same effect because it's built among dense plantings and painted to match the surrounding flowers. Place a thick layer of mulch around the base to provide a soft landing for those who like to climb.



For the adventurous, why not have two tree houses with a zip line between them? Be sure the tree limbs are strong enough to hold the weight.



This posh version of a tree house includes floral window boxes, a chandelier, pastel painted timber, and a pulley system to lift a basket of goodies from Mom.





LANDSCAPING

You'll need a solid foundation on which to show off your creative garden projects. Read on for tips on building greenhouses, rustic pathways, water features and more.

Growing Under Cover

Extend your gardening season—or even plant year-round—with the stable and warm environment of a greenhouse.



This quirky greenhouse is made mostly from salvaged building materials, old windows screwed together to form the walls and a reclaimed door. Use your imagination when visiting the salvage yard!



If you don't have the space for a full-size greenhouse, this mini version is ideal for growing some chilies and cherry tomatoes. It's simple to make from recycled window frames. Paint it a vibrant color and it will become a real focal point.

Greenhouses can be made on a shoestring budget. Here, a simple lumber frame supports bamboo canes onto which empty plastic bottles are threaded and stacked. You can also make a bottle roof, which allows some rain in, or use inexpensive polycarbonate sheeting.





Two in one! This combination greenhouse and shed is the ideal garden building, with easy access to your gardening supplies and no need for two separate buildings. Be sure the greenhouse side faces the sun!



Use a fan set on low in your greenhouse to keep the air circulating. This will help keep plants and soil dry, and fungus and disease at bay.



If yard space is at a premium, you don't need to have a separate shed. A storage area at the back of the greenhouse will keep supplies right where you need them.

A larger greenhouse can be the ideal place to incorporate a seating area. On wet or cooler days, it's a great place to relax and enjoy your garden.



QUICK TIP

Barrels of water and/or rocks placed inside your greenhouse will help pull in the sun's heat, keeping your plants warm even when it's chilly outside.

Building a Greenhouse

You know you have been bit by the gardening bug when you construct a home to keep your plants warm! Get ready for fresh-cut flowers, fruit and crops all year round.

▶ Putting up a greenhouse is a two-person job involving a fair bit of muscle, so make sure you have the help you need. The hard work is really worth it, though!

There are many greenhouse kits available online at all budgets, but before you buy make sure you have identified the best place to site it to

maximize the amount of sunlight it will receive, especially in the winter.

A south or southeast exposure is best, and if you position the longest wall to face south it will naturally collect a lot of solar energy. In the warmer months you will need good ventilation, so choose a plan with plenty of vents or windows.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 2 days: one to make the base; one to build the frame

COST \$\$\$\$

MATERIALS

- Greenhouse kit
- Rectangular concrete blocks
- Tools: spade; shovel; electric drill; level
- Concrete-and-aggregate mix
- All-purpose sand
- Paving slabs

STEP 1 Dig out a 1-foot-deep foundation slightly larger than the greenhouse size.

STEP 2 Fill with dry concrete-and-aggregate mix and level it.

STEP 3 Place sand around the perimeter of the base, then place the concrete blocks in the sand; make sure the blocks are completely level.

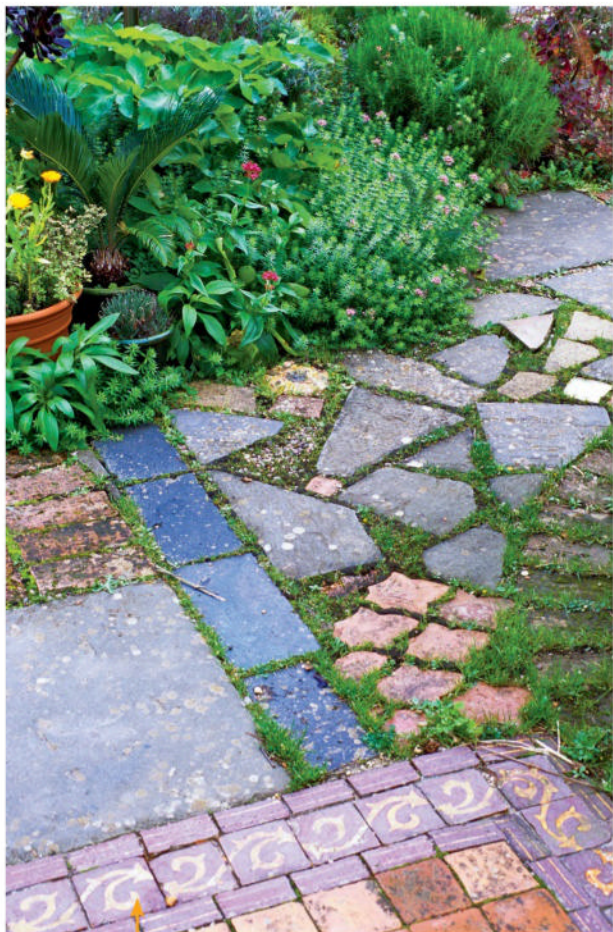
STEP 4 Screw the sides of the greenhouse together, then screw the structure to the blocks to anchor it.

STEP 5 Attach the glass into the greenhouse frame. (If you have kids, or kids visiting your yard, you may want to invest in shatterproof glass.)

STEP 6 Lay paving slabs down the middle of the greenhouse to form a path and fill the growing beds with soil. Alternatively, you can pave the whole interior of the greenhouse and use grow bags and pots for your crops.

Walk This Way

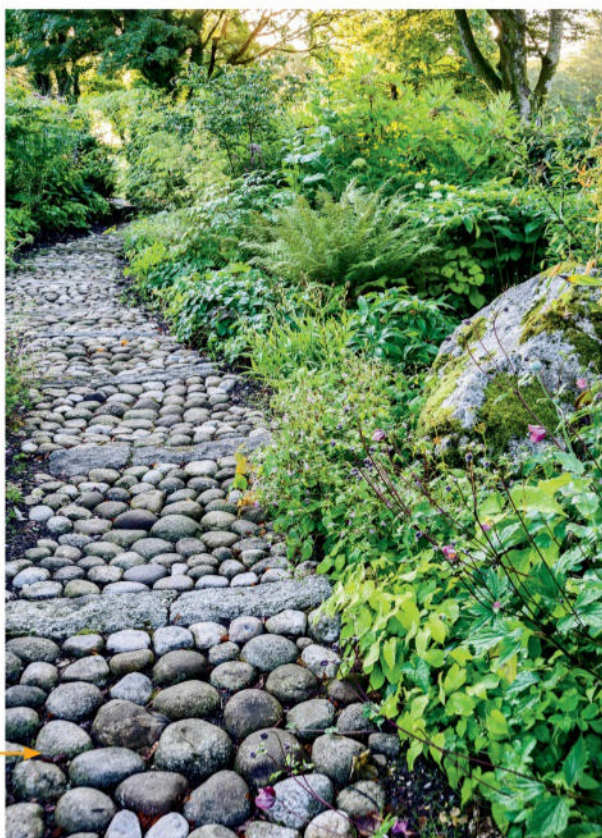
More than just a means to get from point A to point B, garden paths provide an opportunity to add style and character to your outdoor space.



Mixed materials from the salvage yard can be combined in interesting patterns to fit around your other design elements.



Flagstone pavers are ideally suited to use as stepping stones. Plant around them with creeping alpine and herbs for a lush green pathway. Thyme and chamomile are good choices that will release a pleasant fragrance as you walk.



Natural granite cobblestones and rocks are used to create this winding path through shady border plantings. They are easily bedded in place on all-purpose sand.

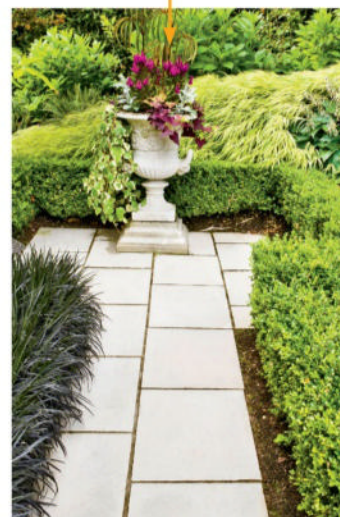
Stepping stones in a similar color to a wider gravel path make it easier to walk across the garden while still retaining the feeling of space, as seen in this Asian-inspired garden.

Keep gravel in place with an edging material like this recycled-plastic border. Larger stones, concrete curbing or bricks would all work just as well.



Classic flagstone pavers with their irregular shapes are used to create an interesting pathway. The varied shapes lend themselves to making paths that wind and twist through a garden.

Honed-stone pavers or smooth concrete pavers can be used in patterns for a more formal look, especially when paired with hedging and ornate planters as shown here.





QUICK TIP

Over time, dirt and spills will deteriorate brick. Sweep your walkway often and use cat litter to absorb any liquid spills or oils.

Path to Success

Infuse your yard with rustic charm by laying a brick walkway. There is nothing better than building something yourself—especially when it's not only functional, but good looking, too!

Tackling hard-landscaping tasks is not for the faint of heart! You'll need patience, a methodical mind and the stamina to see it through to completion. Oh, and a weekend when you know the weather is forecasted to be good!

The key to success is having the right tools and a well-thought-out

plan. Measure how long and wide your path will be and do the math to ensure you buy enough bricks and sand for the base. Lastly, don't forget to plan how to use the excess turf you dig out. A clever idea: Turn it upside down in the bottom of new planting beds to raise the soil level before planting.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 1-2 days

COST \$\$\$

MATERIALS

- Rope to outline your pathway
- Wooden stakes
- Rubber mallet
- Bricks—about 50 per square yard of pathway
- Wheelbarrow
- All-purpose sand
- Spade
- Wood plank (to level sand)
- Level
- Metal ground tamper
- Yard broom or other stiff-bristled broom

STEP 1 Use two pieces of rope to mark the edges of the pathway. At each end, use a mallet to hammer a stake into the ground and tie both ropes to the stakes.

STEP 2 Using a spade, lift the turf from the marked path. Dig out enough soil so that bricks will be flush with the grass.

STEP 3 Equally distribute sand along the length of the path. Level using a plank of wood.

STEP 4 With a metal ground tamper, pack down the sand before laying the bricks.

STEP 5 Position bricks in a herringbone pattern as shown. Use a mallet to tap them in.

STEP 6 Check that bricks are level, then fill in the gaps at the sides with soil.

STEP 7 Firm in the soil to hold the bricks in place.

STEP 8 Use a broom to gently brush sand into the gaps.

Wow-Worthy Water Features

Transform your backyard into a tranquil oasis with soothing pools, fountains and waterfalls.



The reservoir for this sturdy slate tower fountain is hidden underneath, so it's safe around young children. Water trickling over the stone layers adds an interesting sense of movement to your garden.

Bring an abundance of color to your garden with this simple-to-craft birdbath. Use ready-mixed tile adhesive and grout to attach mosaic tiles in a pattern of your choosing to a terra-cotta garden saucer; add glass stones to the rim.

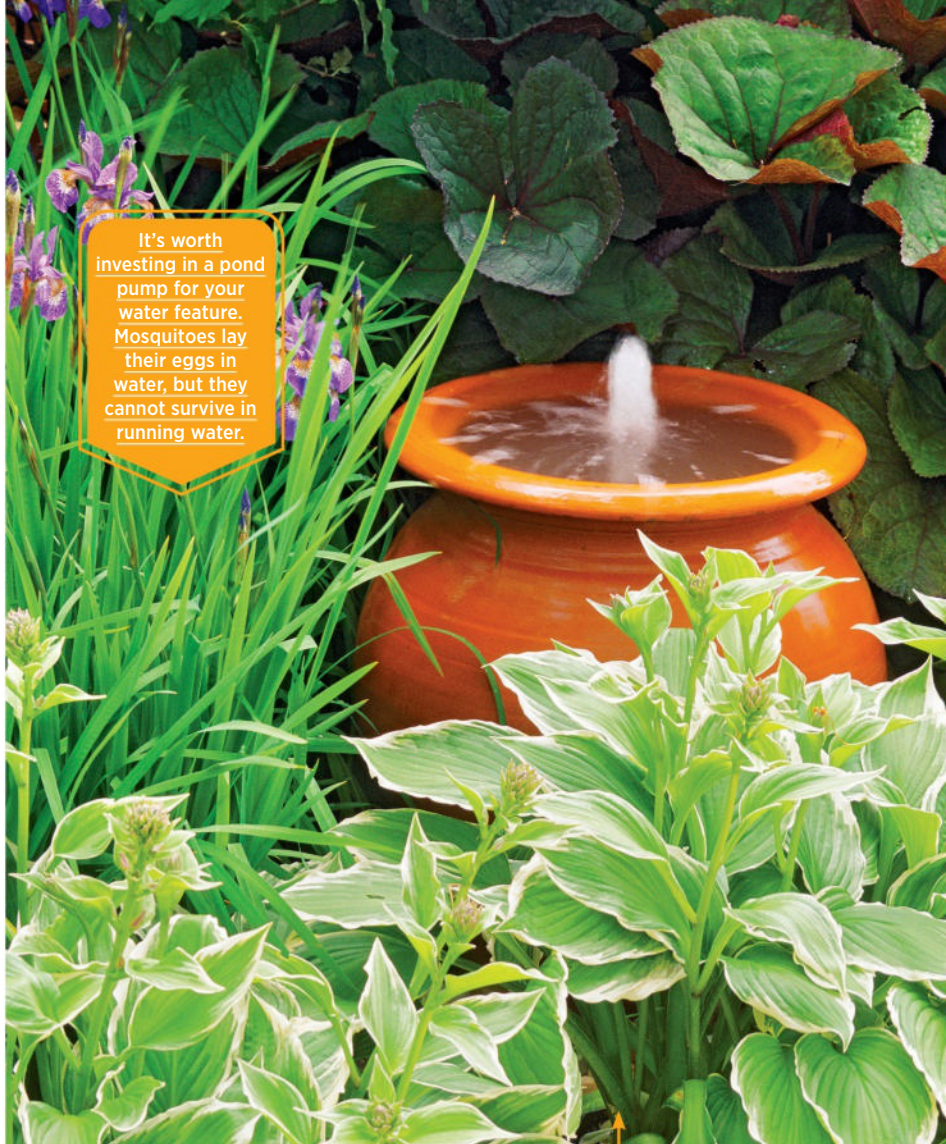


An old stone trough from the salvage yard is used in this water feature. The base of the decorative spout, reminiscent of French and Italian garden design, is hidden among the bushes.





A pair of rectangular pools are striking additions built into this deck. Kids can enjoy dipping their toes in, and the pools are big enough for some small fish. For a sense of symmetry in the design, the pools mirror the shape and size of the planting spaces left in the deck.



It's worth investing in a pond pump for your water feature. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in water, but they cannot survive in running water.



A more formal sphere of stone, drilled through the center, is used here for an impressive water feature. A bigger investment than some other styles, it will provide years of pleasure.

Water features such as this urn can be purchased in kit form, or made at home using a terra-cotta planter, small pond pump and reservoir. They work well nestled in planting beds near seating areas so you can enjoy the sound of moving water.

This dish-shaped water feature with an overflow spout will bring a sense of calm to the garden. By using rounded pebbles where the water overflows, the running water is reduced to a quiet trickle.



QUICK TIP

Just a bit of barley straw will help to keep algae at bay in your backyard pond. While it won't kill the algae, it does inhibit new growth.



Wild About Water

Creating a peaceful pond in your backyard takes commitment—but follow our tips and you'll be rewarded with lots of wildlife visiting your garden.

▶ If you yearn for a garden that can play host to some aquatic creatures, a pond is just what you need. Here, we show you how to create one—but don't expect to carry out all the work in one day. Remember, patience is a virtue!

Establish where the best place for your pond is, bearing in mind that fish and aquatic life like a little

shade. Consider this a work-in-progress kind of project because it can take some time to choose and establish the different types of aquatic plants you want to grow. Our step-by-step instructions are specific to this pond, but you can create your own variation depending on your budget. Your pond, your pocket!

HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 2-3 days

COST \$\$\$

MATERIALS

- Rope
- Spade
- Wheelbarrow
- Level and tape measure
- Length of timber
- Soft play sand
- Topsoil and rake
- Pond liner underlayment
- EPDM pond liner
- Assorted aquatic plants
- Planks, gravel and metal brace for deck (optional)
- Woodworking tools for deck (optional)
- Pieces of irregular flagstone for a dry-stone wall (optional)
- Large decorative stones for pond edges (optional)

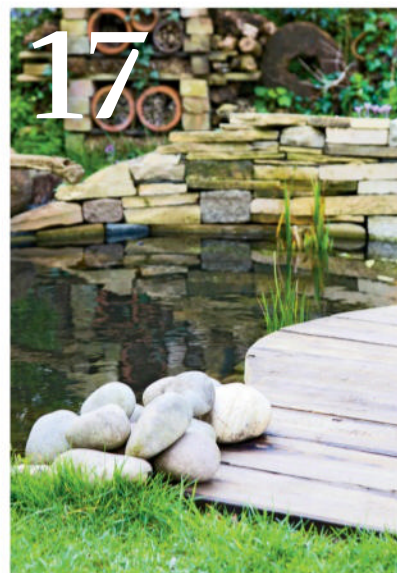


STEP 1 Use rope to mark the desired outline of your pond.

STEP 2 Remove the turf within the outline with a spade. Pile it in a shady area to keep it moist. You can use it later to hide sections of the pond liner.

STEP 3 Dig out the pond, making some parts deeper than others. (Different plants like to have their roots at different depths.)

STEP 4 Use a level and a wood plank to ensure the top of your prepared base is even.





STEP 5 Cover the surface of the excavation with play sand.

STEP 6 Add the pond underlayment to provide extra protection for the EPDM liner and help the liner move into position.

STEP 7 Place the EPDM pond liner over the dug-out area and gently nudge it into place.

STEP 8 Fill the pond with water. Trim off the excess liner, leaving a 1½-foot border all around. Various decorative effects can cover this later.

STEP 9 If desired, arrange large stones around a section of the outside of the pond, and half-submerge another pile of stones in the water.

STEP 10 Position aquatic plants in the water. Depending on the variety, some will want to be completely submerged and others like their leaves on the surface of the water.

STEP 11 Construct a dry-stone wall on one side of the pond by layering pieces of flagstone following the outline of your pond. The face of the wall should slope back from the pond to prevent stones from falling in.

STEP 12 Add topsoil behind the wall and firm into position to create a raised bed, which also helps to support the wall.

STEP 13 To add an area of decking, lay some gravel as desired for the base.

STEP 14 Arrange the planks to fit with your design.

STEP 15 Screw a large metal brace across the planks to hold them together.

STEP 16 Use a jigsaw to cut a curved edge in the wood where the deck will overhang the water.

STEP 17 Put decking in place and add piles of stones for a decorative effect.

STEP 18 Add fish to the pond, if desired. The pond will attract wildlife year-round—it's a great way for kids to learn about nature in their own backyard.

Perfect Patios

Whether serene, simple, sensational or stunning, we've got plenty of ideas to inspire you to create an ideal outdoor space that suits your style.



An extra-wide garden walkway becomes part meandering path and part patio. The furniture can be easily rearranged to change the purpose of the space.



Fresh-cut wood should dry for at least six months before you burn it. When stacking logs, pile loosely enough to allow air to flow through.

Form follows function with this built-in seating around a fire pit. The space below the benches offers ample storage for firewood, and when kept fully stocked looks attractive, too.



Combine beauty with practicality by growing wisteria across a pergola to cover your patio. You'll gain delicate scent, dappled shade and pretty flowers—plus, there will be no need to put up (or pack away) a patio umbrella.



A covered patio is very cozy and welcoming, especially when accessorized with artwork like these hanging plates and paintings on the walls. It has the feeling of stepping into an artist's studio.

For some smaller spaces, like this courtyard, it makes sense to pave the whole area. Light-colored pavers or stones will make it appear larger, and container gardens can fill the void of no lawn.





If you have the space, a swing seat is the ultimate outdoor luxury. You can use a pergola-style top like this one as a frame for climbing flowers like honeysuckle or clematis, and blanket yourself in color.

Want tons of flowers, plus lots of room for seating? Rather than fill your patio with containers, plant overhead. This pergola has long troughs that are planted along the length with trailing flowers. The walls are screened with bamboo to give the whole space a lush feel.



Birds will enjoy a water feature in your yard as much as you will. To ensure their safety, only use all-natural products when you clean your fountain.

For dramatic effect, a black-and-white scheme is hard to beat. Here, the white marble squares are edged with black timber raised beds, black pebble trim and a black timber-framed water feature. The contrast between light and dark has been carried through to the plantings, with lime-green plants against dark-purple foliage.

Where space is at a premium, raised beds that incorporate both water features and seating, and the use of one bold color throughout, will make the area appear bigger than it really is.



For patio furniture on a shoestring budget, pallet seating is a creative solution. This daybed is made with two large wood pallets painted light gray and stacked, then topped with soft blankets and cushions.



Dreamy Decks

An extension of the home, an outdoor deck serves as a lounge, a dining room and more. Here, we help you find the style that suits your needs and taste.



Decks can be more interesting than just straight planks. This one has been designed with square panels of diagonal boards framed in groups of four to create this eclectic pattern.

The mixed-material flooring of this deck serves to separate the cooking and seating areas. The outdoor kitchen space, with wood flooring, is kept more private, which will allow the chef room to work, while guests can mingle on the outer stone portion of the deck.



Furniture on casters is ideal for decks—pieces can be easily moved around and out of the way for a pool party!



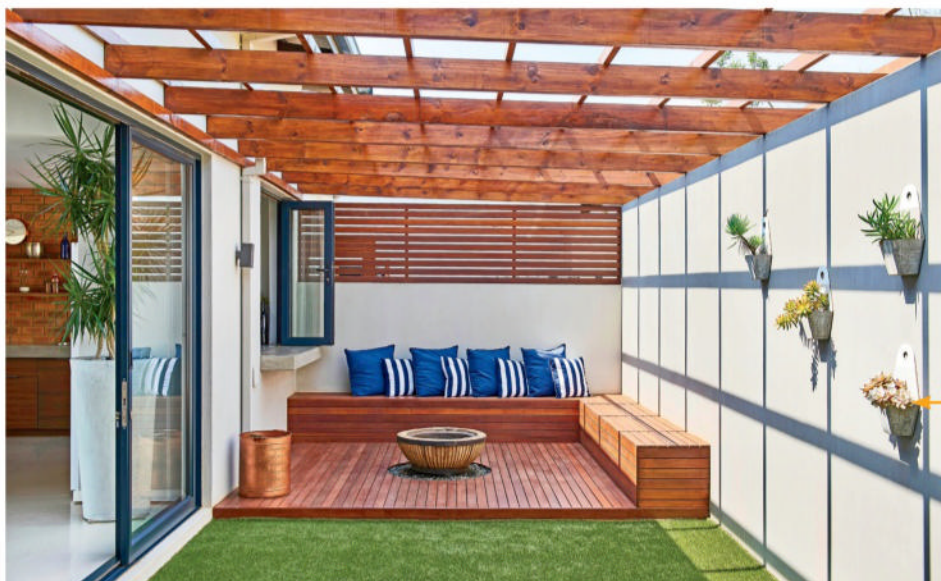


Decking can be used for more than just sitting areas. Try it to create interesting paths so you can enjoy your favorite garden areas up close. Boards bolted together like this are incredibly strong and less slippery when wet.

Staying cool on a hot day is much easier if you have a permanent shade structure rather than a patio umbrella. Here it is designed to mirror the scale and direction of the deck boards, creating a feeling of symmetry and calm.



The best way to remove a grease stain from your wood deck is with powdered laundry detergent. Sprinkle it liberally on the stain, let set, scrub with a brush, then rinse.



For smaller spaces, seating can be incorporated into the deck. By using the same materials, you'll fool the eye into thinking the space is bigger than it really is. Removable tops to the built-in seating provides access to hidden storage for your cushions and garden games.



QUICK TIP

Decks need a thorough cleaning once a year. A power washer can damage wood. Use a "fireman" nozzle (available at auto-parts stores) on your hose instead.

Center Stage

Let's get things straight—a circular deck isn't quite as easy to make as a square or rectangular one, but it's built using the same principles. Here's how to round out your yard.

1 You've never been one to blend in with the crowd, so why should your backyard deck be run-of-the-mill? While somewhat unconventional, believe it or not, a circular deck is really not difficult to build—and once finished, it will be impossible to ignore!

This project promises to provide the perfect platform to chillax

and entertain family and friends in style. Let it be the focal point in your garden and offer the elevation to enjoy the view as the sun goes down.

If you've got the space—and the ambition—add a fun walkway and hammocks. Plantings around the circular structure will make it appear as if it's floating on air.



HOW TO MAKE IT

TIME 2 days

COST \$\$\$\$

MATERIALS

- 12 wooden posts (4x4s)
- 12 planks of 4- x 2-inch lumber
- Wooden decking boards
- Cement
- Weed-resistant membrane
- Spade, level, deck screws, jigsaw, hand saw, tape measure, marking spray

STEP 1 Sink a stick in the center of the area where you want the deck; attach the tape measure to it and walk in a circle, using marking spray to outline.

STEP 2 Dig 9 evenly spaced holes along the line and 3 through the center of the circle. Place concrete, then a post, in each hole.

STEP 3 Fill holes with remaining concrete and let dry 24 hours.

STEP 4 Use deck screws to attach 4x2s between posts at desired heights, forming a ring.

STEP 5 Use a hand saw to cut the posts even with 4x2s.

STEP 6 Cut remaining 4x2s to the length across the center of the ring. Use deck screws to attach them to internal posts and the ring.

STEP 7 Place the membrane underneath. Screw deck planks, 1/8 inch apart, to the ring.

STEP 8 Use a jigsaw to round the deck's edges (mark a pencil circle the same way as marking the ground for the base).

CENTENNIAL GARDENING®

EVERYDAY GARDEN PROJECTS

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